

T H E  
**Folly of a Libeller**  
MADE MANIFEST:  
BEING  
*Some Brief Observations*  
UPON A  
**LIBEL,**

Lately Published, and Abusively Entituled,

*The Dangerous Imposture of Quakerism.*

Wherein the Envious Abuses of that Author  
are Detected.

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By **RICHARD ASHBY.**

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2 COR. VI.—

*But in all things approving our selves Ministers of God, in much  
Patience,—By the Word of Truth, by the Power of God,—  
by Honour and Dishonour, by Evil Report and Good Report; as  
Deceivers, and yet True.*

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L O N D O N,

Printed and Sold by T. Sowle, in White-Hart-Court in Gracious-  
street, and at the Bible in Leaden-Hall-street, 1699.

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dearest friend to your desire to see  
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# THE LIBELLER's Folly

## Made Manifest, &c.

*Friendly Reader,*

**I** Intreat thy Moderation and Patience, in perusing these brief Observations, which were occasioned by meeting with the abovesaid Paper, which containeth several Abuses, designed to Traduce and Un-Christian the People called *Quakers*, by rendering them *Impostors*. And this nameless Author pretends to draw his Charges out of the *Journal* of our deceased Friend *George Fox*, who was a Faithful Servant of Christ in his Generation, and one that suffered much for Christ's sake; whom this Author has greatly defamed; but refers not to any Page in his said Book, only citing his *Journal*, being in Folio, of above 600 Pages, wherein he shews himself very disingenuous; and his concealing his Name, shews that he is ashamed of his work, and therefore lies *Incognito*. And yet towards the end of his Paper, tells the World, *he never did us (i. e. the Quakers) any hurt*; and pretends to pity us; which the matter of his Paper plainly shews he is far from: However, I think to give a brief touch upon it. He tells us, *he has read over G. F.'s Journal*, whom he calls *Impostor*, but gives no demonstration to prove it; and must be extravagantly conceited with his little Libel, to think his bare *Ipse dixit* proves it. His Paper being divided into Four Parts, I shall take notice of them in order, as they fall.

Dangerous Imposture. First, *The real Author of this Imposture was George Fox; and 'tis worth our taking notice of, what his true Character was. He was, when he began to publish his Doctrine, a young Man who had had a Religious Education, and in the 10th & 10th Years of his Age was exercised with strong Temptations to Despair, and was under great Troubles and Disorders of Mind, on that account, such as could not be removed by those Ministers he had recourse unto.*

*Answer.* It would have been more pertinent for this Author to consider, that G. F. when in Troubles and Distress of Mind, made his Condition known to the Ministers (that then were) to obtain comfort; but those Physicians of Souls prov'd of no value to him: And if this were strictly enquired into, it may justly be fear'd, the Number of such at this day are great, and the State of the People to be lamented, who spend their Money for that which is not Bread, and their Labour for that which satisfies not. And it's very obvious, that among these Pretenders lies the Imposture.

*Dang. Impost.* Upon this he betook himself to Retirement and Solitude night and day—went alone into Solitary Places, with his Bible and his own Thoughts, &c.

*Answ.* What Offence, or bad Example, could this be? Nay, doth it not shew apparently the contrary? See the Prophet's words, Lament. 3. 26 to 29. I hope this Author doth not reckon it a Crime, that he took his Bible with him, as a Companion in his Solitude; this shews the great Esteem he had of those Holy Writings.

*Dang. Impost.* By degrees, he imagined, God made known his Will to him, and opened to him (as his phrase is) That the Light of Christ within Man was to be his Instructor and Guide in matters of Religion; and thorough this Imagination he sometimes gain'd Comfort and Joy, and by degrees arriv'd at extreme Presumption and Confidence.

*Answ.* If this Author means, that whatever G. F. knew concerning God, it was but Imagination, and an effect of his own Thoughts; and because G. F. says, God opened to him, That the Light of Christ in Man, was to be his Guide, &c. Doth not this Author sufficiently bewray his own Folly and Ignorance? And shews that he is little acquainted with Scripture-Testimony, to term the Light (of Christ) within Man, an Imagina-

A true receipt of happiness from me

tion; and the Knowledge, that comes from it, only Imaginary: See what the Scripture saith, 2 Cor. 4. 6. For God, who commanded the Light to shine out of Darknes, he hath shined in our Hearts; to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ. If I mention no more, this is sufficient to shew this Author's abuse. Yet take the words of Christ our Lord, John 8. 12. I am the Light of the World, he that follows me shall not walk in Darknes, but shall have the Light of Life. Again, John 12. 36. While ye have the Light, believe in the Light, that ye may become Children of Light. And saith David, Psalm 36. 9. With thee is the Fountain of Life; in thy Light shall we see Light. And Psalm 43. 3. O send out thy Light and thy Truth; let them lead me, let them bring me to thy holy Hill, &c. Now I tell Author, God will scatter the Proud in the Imagination of their Hearts; and take the Wise in their own Craftiness. No wonder he conceals his Name, who shews such contempt to the Appearance of Christ in Man.

Dang. Impost. When he affirmed, That Christ was in him; he did not mean, that the Man Jesus of Nazareth was in him— But the Word and the Light (John 1. 1; 7, 13.) which was in Jesus of Nazareth, was also (though not in the same measure) in G. F. Answ. G. F. did not hold two Christs, but One Lord, Jesus Christ, as 1 Cor. 8. 6. Observe the Evangelist's Testimony (John 1. 14, 15.) We beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. And of his fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace. In him was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men, John 1. 4. Now if true Believers do receive of Christ's Fulness, and of his Life, then they receive a measure of the same; and by vertue thereof, they are grafted into him, the Heavenly Vine; and by abiding in him, are made fruitful towards God, see John 17.

Dang. Impost. But for G. F. to affirm, That Christ was in him, is an excess of Error and Profaneness, such as no sober Christian, who knows, that by this his Blessed Saviour is distinguished from, and exalted above the highest Angels can endure to hear, without the utmost Abhorrence and Abomination.

Answ. G. F. and the rest of the People called Quakers, never owned the Appearance of Christ in them any otherwise than as the holy Scriptures bear witness; and I conclude this Man's charging us, as Erroneous herein, proceeds not only from the

the Prejudice he hath against us, but also shews him to be carnal and ignorant of the Mystery of the Gospel; seeing he charges this as *Excess of Error and Profaneness*; his Charge reflects upon *Christ*, and his holy *Apostles*, who assert the Spiritual Appearance or Indwelling of *Christ* in Men, and returns upon himself, and proves him in *Excess of Error and Profaneness*; and for proof, see *Christ's* own words, *John* 14. 20. & 17. 23. *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. — I in them, and they in me, that the World may know that thou hast sent me, &c.* And *Col.* 1. 27. *Christ in you the hope of Glory.* To which, for Brevity sake, I shall only add *2 Cor.* 13. 5. and *Rom.* 8. 9, 10. Now we do not hold the Spiritual Appearance of *Christ* in opposition to his being Exalted in Glory, at *God's* Right Hand, but we do believe it according to Holy Scripture-Testimony; and that he is our Mediator, appearing in the Presence of *God* for us. If this Author has charged us through Ignorance, his Crime is the less; but if through Prejudice, let him consider whose Testimonies these are, above recited, and see if he can clear himself from Blasphemy; who hath not only charged the *Quakers*, but *Christ* and his *Apostles*; for we assert no other thing but what they have done.

Dang. Impost. *This is the Fundamental Error, and Prodigious Delusion, that the Author of Quakerism entertain'd and set up in the World, and this his Followers defend and maintain to this Day.*

Ans. I have before shewn *Christ's* own Testimony, and the *Apostles*, concerning the Spiritual Indwelling of *Christ*: Surely some Eminent Judgment has befallen this Author, and he is strongly Deluded and Blind, in calling a Fundamental Gospel-Truth Error and Prodigious Delusion. *Paul* saith, *Rom.* 8. 9. *Now if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Can a Man have the Spirit of *Christ*, and yet not have *Christ*? When the *Apostle* says, *2 Cor.* 3. 17. *The Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

Thus having prov'd from Scripture, That to be a precious Fundamental-Truth (which he calls Error) and such a Truth as our Souls Everlasting Well-being depends upon: I shall pass by the rest of his First Part, without farther notice: For the Foundation proving false, all that is built upon it falls. Therefore I come to his Second Part: To consider his Charges, that (he saith) are Pernicious to Humane Society,

And



And First, *The Quakers deny the Lawfulness of an Oath, even in Courts of Judicature.*

*Answ.* The Scripture-Testimonies, that speak so plainly in behalf of our Christian Principle herein (*Mat. 5. 34 to 37. James 5. 12.*) concerning Swearing, being very obvious, it is very strange, that this Author shou'd thus charge the Doctrine of *Christ*, and the Apostle *James*, as being Pernicious to *Humane Society*; but surely the Beam is in his own Eye, and he in that spirit that is pernicious to *Humane Society*.

His Second Pernicious Doctrine is, *Our not putting off our Hats to Superiours.*

*Answ.* We are perswaded our Superiours have more Charitable Thoughts of us: True Honour and Respect doth not consist in *putting off our Hats*. We honour all Men in the Lord, and Magistrates in their Station, believing Magistracy is an Ordinance of God; and we are ready to obey Magistrates in every good Work, though we cannot conform to the vain Customs of the World: Remember the Caution of the Apostle, *Be not Conformed to this World, but be ye Transformed by the Renewing of your Minds*, Rom. 12. 2.

His Third Pernicious Doctrine is, *Our refusing to Fight*: This he renders with some Agravation.

*Answ.* We are concerned to Fight under *Christ's Banner*; not with *Men*, but with *Sin*, and the *Devil*, the Author of Sin; and do believe, if People were more concerned herein, they might come to know that Scripture fulfilled, *namely, When a Man's ways please the Lord, he will make his Enemies to be at peace with him*, Prov. 16. 7.

There are many Glorious Promises in Scripture, concerning the Cessation of War, we believe it will be gradually fulfilled; and the time is come and coming, when the *Swords shall be beaten into Plow-shares, and the Spears into Pruning-hooks*; and *Nation shall not lift up Sword against Nation, nor learn War any more*, as in *Isa. 23. Micah 4. 3.* The Lord hasten this time, and help us to Love our Enemies, and to overcome Evil with that which is Good. Now if Men live in Love, suppress Vice, and promote Vertue, surely this is the only Preservative to *Humane Society*, because the *Angel of the Lord encamps about them that fear him, and delivereth them*, Psalm 34. 7.

Now I come to those Doctrines he charges as *Pernicious to Christian Religion*, which he saith are: First, *The denying the use of the Two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper*, (and adds) *The Son of God judged it expedient to Establish these sensible Rites for Religious Purposes.* —

*Ans.* That which is Pernicious to the Christian Religion, is, the want of *Charity* among Men; and their straining things farther than they are expressed in the Holy Scriptures, and then calling them *Christ's Ordinances*. This Author had done something to his purpose, if he had proved by plain Scripture where Christ did establish these sensible *Rites for Religious Purposes*, as he would have that which he calls the Two Sacraments, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, to be; where did ever our Lord Jesus ordain, That all People must be Dipped or Sprinkled with a little Water? And where did Christ ordain the use of the outward *Bread* and the *Cup*, as his peculiar Ordinance for his Church to continue in the Practice of to the end of the World? If Jesus Christ hath ordained these things, shew us them in his own words, in the Holy Scripture; for it is not Mens Arguments that makes Christ's Ordinances, but the very Words of him that Ordaineth them. We do believe, that when Christ is enjoyed in Spirit, he doth in a more excellent manner discover himself to the Soul, than any outward Remembrancer of him can do: We do not look upon these outward Signs and Shadows to be agreeable to the Gospel-Dispensation; yet where any are truly Consciencious, being perswaded it is their Duty to Practice these outward things, we are tender towards such, and desire they may come to see thorough all Signs and Shadows, unto Christ, who is the Substance; and feed upon him, who is the Living Bread that cometh down from Heaven, that a Man may eat thereof, and not die, John 6. 50 to 58.

His Second, as *Pernicious to Christian Religion*, is, *The denying and vilifying a Learned Ministry, as unnecessary and unlawful.*

*Ans.* We own, and highly esteem, Gospel-Ministry: But that which is *Pernicious to Christian Religion*, is the exalting *Humane Learning*, in Opposition to the Holy Spirit's Teaching; by this hath great Confusion crept in among Religious Societies; which might have been prevented, had that Learning, which is truly Christian, been minded, as is set forth in 1 Cor. 2. and in 1 Cor. 3. 4, 5, 6. Here is true *Christian Learning*, by the Spirit of God, by which



which the Mind of God is made known; and they who are Taught hereby (being call'd of God) speak with Authority, having received Ability from God, as saith the Apostle, 1 Per. 4. 10, 11. Of these things the Scriptures testify plentifully; shewing the Qualification of Ministers. And as concerning Humane Learning, we esteem it good in its place; but that's not the Key that opens the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God: But the Spirit of God is that Key, and is therefore to be prefer'd before all the Natural Learning of Men. And this was G. F.'s judgment concerning it, who was no Villifier of Christ's Ministers, but reprov'd such as ran, and said *God did not send them*, Jer. 23. 21. *And through Ceremonies, with feigned words, make Merchandize of poor Souls*, 2 Per. 2. 3. Such he reprov'd, and so did the Servants of God in former Ages, as the Holy Scripture witnesseth. To this I may add, this Author's Complaint of the *Quakers non-payment of Tithes*: And whatever are his Thoughts, if the old Proverb be true, viz. *Give the Laster leave to speak*; the *Quakers* have most cause to complain of the *Priests* Severity, Spoiling and Havock, (by *Sequestrations* and otherwise) yet if this Author had rightly observed that Scripture he cites, Luke 10. 7. he had not only seen what was the Maintenance of Christ's Ministers, but who, and of whom, they were to receive it; for they were first to be received in their Office, ministering Spirituals; and then, those that received them, with those they were to Eat and Drink such things as they gave. Here's Christ's Allowance observed by his Ministers; and they that go from Christ's Command [in their so doing] are like *Hophni and Phinehas*, the Sons of *Eli*, who were not content with God's allowance under the Law, and therefore offered Violence to the poor *Israelites*, telling them, *If they would not give them, they would take it by force*: This their Sin was very great before the Lord; and he punished them. For God will not be mocked, such as honour him, them he'll honour; and such as despise him, shall be lightly esteemed, 1 Sam. 2. 15, 30.

His Third, as *Pernicious to Christian Religion*, is, (as he saith) *Our denying the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures; and pretending, that no Man can understand them, unless he hath the same Spirit by which the Doctrine of Holy Scriptures were given forth; nor will they (what I can find) allow any one to be in the Spirit, which is necessary to the understanding of the Scriptures, who is not a Quaker.* *h. 224*

A *Letter* 2d. to 2d. 11. 12. 13.

*Ans.* We own the Holy Scriptures, according as they testify of themselves, 2 *Tim.* 3. 14, 15, 16, 17. And also say, The true Knowledge of them, and Faith in Christ Jesus, cannot be truly known, but by the inward Manifestation, Work and Operation of the Holy Spirit: And this Spirit we do not limit to our selves; we say, It strives with all Men in a Day of Visitation, which the Lord gives, which we desire they may mind, so as to know a being sealed by it, and may have the earnest of it in their Hearts. And now I appeal to all Tender-hearted Christians, Think ye, that it is unreasonable for us to expect the Gift and Guidance of the Spirit of Truth, when the Scriptures themselves plainly and plentifully declare thereof; and also saith, That he that hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his.

And now for his Trifling Observations, I shall pass them by, with these brief Answers:

*First,* As to our saying *Thou to a single Person*; Man ought not to despise that form of Speech he uses to the great God; for if he doth, God will behold his Pride, and abase him.

*Secondly,* He abuses us about the words *Yes* and *No*; as tho' we used them only, and refused *Yes* or *No*. Our frequent Conversation among Men reproves this Fallshood.

*Thirdly,* As concerning our *Marriages* and *Burials*; As we Conscientiously Dissent, so we have Scripture to vindicate our Practice therein.

*Fourthly,* He abuses us, as tho' we allowed amongst us *Gaudy* and *Costly Attire*: Which we testify against, and more especially to those that come amongst us. And his stuff about the *Green-Apron*, I pass by as a *Fig-leaf-story*.

Thus having made some brief Observations upon the Substance of his Paper, contain'd in his *First* and *Second* Part, I shall mention a few Instances out of *G. F's Journal*, in answer to his *Third Part*; and desire the Impartial Reader to judge, whether they favour of *Confused Madness*, as this *Libeller* insinuates: See *Journal* p. 4. his Confession of the Excellent Benefits we receive through Christ's Sufferings and Death, *viz.* "All that time, the Sins of all Mankind was upon him [Christ] and their Iniquities" and Transgressions, with which he was wounded, which he was to bear, and to be an Offering for them, as he was Man; but died not as he was God; and so in that he died for all Men, and tasted Death for every Man, He was an Offering for the Sins of the whole World.

2dly. Concerning how he [G. F.] was relieved in deep Afflictions; see *Four*. p. 8. "And when all my hopes in them (the Priests, and other Professors) and in all Men, was gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could tell what to do; Then, O then, I heard a Voice which said; *There is one, even Jesus Christ, that can speak to thy Condition.* And when I heard it, my Heart did leap for Joy; then the Lord did let me see why there was none upon the Earth that could speak to my Condition, namely, That I might give him all the Glory, &c.

3dly. Hear his Confession to the great Love and Mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, *Four*. p. 9, 10. viz. "I was taken up in the Love of God, so that I could not but admire the greatness of his Love: And whilst I was in that Condition, it was open'd unto me, by the Eternal Light and Power, and I therein clearly saw, that all was done, and to be done, by Christ; how he conquers and destroys this Tempter, the Devil, and all his Works, and is a-top of him; and that all these Troubles and Temptations were good for me, for the trial of my Faith, which Christ had given me.

Judge, *Impartial Reader*, of these Instances, whether they do not favour apparently of the Work of God's Grace. And when thou hast opportunity read over this *Journal*; but do not read as this Libeller has done; for, doubtless, he read with a Prejudicial Design, or else he had not thus abused the deceased Author.

To conclude, I find the Two Principal Reasons, he renders to prove G. F. an Impostor, are, His Youth, and want of Natural Learning. My brief answer is, as in *1 Cor.* 1. 20. *Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World?* And again, from the 26th verse to the end. *For ye see your Calling, Brethren; how that not many Wise Men after the Flesh, nor many Mighty, nor many Noble, are called; but God hath chosen the Foolish things of the World, to confound the Wise; and God hath chosen the Weak things of the World, to confound the things that are Mighty; and Base things of the World, and things which are Despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nothing things which are; that no Flesh should glory in his presence.*

Upon

Upon the Fourth Part, he pretends a Riches of (1) *Facets*, (2) *Estims*, (3) *Prophecies*, (4) *Miracles*, (5) *Discerning of Spirits*, (6) *The knowledge of Nature, and the whole Creation*, (7) *Being in the same State that Adam was in before the fall; which* (said he) *is more than ever any Prophet or Apostle attained to.* ; 66 of just

*Answer.* This Author cites not one Page for this; which, if he had, we might have seen what G. F. had said concerning what he thus repeats; and until he deals more plainly in his Citations, I shall only say, whatever G. F. did know of any of the above-mentioned Attainments, he ascribed the Power and Glory to God only; by whose Grace he was what he was. ; 101 of the

He charges G. F. with *Insolent Provocations*, and that thereby he brought Suffering upon himself. ; 100 of just 61, 60, 10 to speak

*Answer.* This is but like his frequent Abuses, which he offers to this Servant of Christ. ; 101 of just 61, 60, 10 to speak

He tells us, *He was to Expostulate with us, out of Compassion to our Sins*; and this evens his bad argument on well. ; 101 of

*Answer.* He might speak more plain, and say, *Wield of Compassion* for his pretences are much like what History says of the *Tears of the Crocodile*. He begins his Paper with the ill Name of *disputation*; and ends it with a worse, and with no less than a *Charge of Blasphemy*: But they are drawn from false Translations. I will therefore now to conclude, with the words of Christ.

*Mat. 23. 34.* *Blessed are you, when Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of Evil against you falsely for my Name sake: Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your Reward in Heaven. For so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you.* It hainly becometh God to behold the Threwtings of our Adversaries; and where any do it ignorantly, to open their Understandings; and let them see what they are doing, that they may desist; and where Envy and Malice prevails in any, and prompts them to do us Evil, the Lord behold it, and frustrate them in their Evil Designs; and, if their Day be not over, give them a Heart to Repent, and show them Mercy; which is my desire for the worst of our Enemies, having Love and Good-will in my Heart for all Men.

Richard Ashby.

F I N I S

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